

REMARKS

The pending claims are 1-3, 5-10, 12, 13 and 16-18, 21 and 23.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner is thanked for the indication, in paragraph 8 of the last Office Action that claims 1, 5-10, 12, 13, 18, 21, and 23 are allowable.

Issues under 35 USC 112

The objections to claims 2, 3, 16, and 17 in paragraph 3 of the last Office Action are traversed but have been rendered moot by the present amendments. The Examiner is thanked for suggesting that Claim 2 be rewritten in independent form. This has been done. Support for the material added to claim 2 can be found in claims 1. Claims 3, 16, and 17 were dependent on claim 2 and remain dependent on claim 2. Since claim 2 is believed to now be free of objection, all claims dependent on claim 2 are believed to be free of objection.

The rejections of claims 19 and 20 in paragraphs 4 and 5 of the last Office Action are traversed but are believed to have been rendered moot by the present amendments.

CONCLUSION

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact David R. Murphy (Reg. No. 22,751) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By _____

John W. Bailey, #32,881

P.O. Box 747

Falls Church, VA 22040-0747

(703) 205-8000

JWB/DRM:enm
1422-0454P